

**TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW  
OF  
BILL RHINEHOLD  
PERSONNEL MANAGER  
ARCORP PROPRIETIES AFFILIATES**

**7 PAGES  
(INCLUDING COVER)**

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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In the Matter of: \*  
\*  
FIRE ON BOARD THE \*  
U.S. PASSENGER VESSEL \*  
PORT IMPERIAL MANHATTAN \*  
NOVEMBER 17, 2000 \*  
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Monday,  
November 20, 2000

INTERVIEW OF:

BILL RHINEHOLD

This interview was conducted by Donald J. Tyrrell,  
Investigator-in-Charge, National Transportation Safety Board,  
Office of Marine Safety, 490 L'Enfant Plaza East, Washington,  
D.C. 20594.

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MR. TYRRELL: State your name?

3 MR. RHINEHOLD: Bill Rhinehold.

4 MR. TYRRELL: And you are the --

5 MR. RHINEHOLD: Personnel Manager for Arcorp  
6 Proprieties Affiliates --7 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Which is a parent  
8 company to New York Waterways or --

9 MR. RHINEHOLD: An affiliate of.

10 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

11 MR. RHINEHOLD: We are altogether.

12 MR. TYRRELL: You handle the personnel matters  
13 for New York Waterways?

14 MR. RHINEHOLD: Yes.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Can you tell --

16 MR. RHINEHOLD: Do you want me to start off  
17 with the interview process?

18 MR. TYRRELL: You might as well.

19 MR. RHINEHOLD: I will start off the interview  
20 process.

21 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

22 MR. RHINEHOLD: An applicant comes in,  
23 completes an application for employment. It is  
24 reviewed by myself. I spend time with the applicant,  
25 going over his work background, some of the skills and

1 so forth, ask if he can swim, ask he has a proper  
2 license to pilot the vessels. After I do my general  
3 prescreening, the applicant is then forwarded to the  
4 Ferry Operations Office where he can be interviewed by  
5 a number of people. There are three ferry operation  
6 personnel. He could be interviewed by each one of them  
7 or one of them singularly. And then possibly the Ferry  
8 Ops senior operations manager. After they pass those  
9 interviews successfully, they come back here and I  
10 would say 99 percent of them are then interviewed by  
11 the vice president and general manager of our  
12 corporation.

13 Before final hire, all applicants are given a  
14 background check. We go through a credit check. We  
15 review their abstract for their driver's license.  
16 After that comes back, they are submitted for a pre  
17 employment physical and a blood test prior to  
18 employment.

19 Once all the information comes back and they  
20 are cleared by a physician, the blood test and alcohol  
21 is negative, they are considered for employment.

22 MR. TYRRELL: Do you check for the five NITA,  
23 NITA 5 drugs?

24 MR. RHINEHOLD: Yes, we have a consortium in  
25 Pennsylvania called DSI -- Pennsylvania, all our chain

1 of custody through those folks.

2 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Can you tell me what  
3 your drug testing program is for your marine crews?

4 MR. RHINEHOLD: Today we are going through our  
5 random drug test over on the Jamestown Terminal over  
6 there. And we randomly drug test all our captains and  
7 deck hands throughout the year.

8 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. So, you have --

9 MR. RHINEHOLD: Pre employment, random.

10 MR. RHINEHOLD: Pre employment. Randoms.

11 MR. TYRRELL: And post accident?

12 MR. RHINEHOLD: Post accident and also  
13 reasonable suspicion, should there come a point where  
14 there is a reasonable suspicion, and based on the  
15 observations of the supervisor and managers, if  
16 somebody appears to be not functioning in the proper  
17 manner, and they have that suspicion, we have a  
18 reasonable suspicion to take them for a drug test.

19 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. How would you  
20 characterize drug usage and alcohol usage in the, I am  
21 talking about the marine fleet, the people that work on  
22 the boats, is it a problem, or not a problem or, I  
23 mean, how would you characterize it?

24 MR. RHINEHOLD: I characterize, it is not a  
25 problem.

1 MR. TYRRELL: Okay.

2 MR. RHINEHOLD: We have 113 folks.

3 MR. TYRRELL: You have 113 marine people?

4 MR. RHINEHOLD: Captains and deck hands, yes,  
5 sir.

6 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. And how many people  
7 would fail a test in a, say a typical year, what would  
8 you expect?

9 MR. RHINEHOLD: One.

10 MR. TYRRELL: One. Okay.

11 As far as training, do you have any in-house  
12 training programs that, when you hire a new person,  
13 that they go through to bring them up to speed?

14 MR. RHINEHOLD: I don't get directly in-house  
15 training, but there is in-house training program. They  
16 spend time, like captains spend time in the wheelhouse  
17 before they are allowed to take the vessel out. I  
18 don't know how long that takes, but somebody, Ferry  
19 Operations take the individuals out. And they go  
20 through a training period. It could be a week, two  
21 weeks, three weeks. I don't know the exact date. Also  
22 in the Maintenance Department, our deck hands, and I am  
23 not sure if captains go through training in the  
24 maintenance area, they learn about the vessel, they  
25 learn about the engine. And then, I am surmising, they

1 don't become experts, but they know where different  
2 leaks and pumps and so forth are, and what do to in  
3 case of problems on the vessel. And that is the extent  
4 of my understanding. Although I have not been directly  
5 involved, I have physically seen them in here, going  
6 through various different operations and I talked to  
7 one of the guys that does some of the training, and he  
8 appears to be a very conscientious individual and takes  
9 his job very seriously and he goes through, shows them  
10 engine room in the vessel, what to do.

11 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. Is this pretty much,  
12 that is not your responsibility as far as --

13 MR. RHINEHOLD: Well, I take an interest, I  
14 look and see.

15 MR. TYRRELL: Okay. That will about do it.  
16 If I, I am sure I will get back to Washington and there  
17 will be something that I didn't ask you. So, I will --

18 MR. RHINEHOLD: I will be here.

19 MR. TYRRELL: -- give you a call.

20 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)